

their child. H.R. 1915 provides invaluable hope to families whose sons and daughters have vanished and remain missing. I therefore ask that all my colleagues vote today in support of Jennifer's Law.

Mr. Speaker, Jennifer's Law is an example of exceptional legislation resulting in better government. The tragic story of Carl and JoAnn Rock demonstrates the need for comprehensive action on the behalf of the thousands of families searching for missing loved ones. H.R. 1915, Jennifer's Law, costs little, but it gives in return the priceless gift of human compassion.

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to express my strong support for H.R. 1915, otherwise known as Jennifer's Law. This legislation will grant states the necessary funds to assist them in entering files of unidentified victims into both the national Missing Persons File and the Unidentified Persons File.

"Jennifer's Law" is named after Jennifer Wilmer, who has been missing since September 13, 1993. When a person is missing, it touches the entire community. In the case of Jennifer, her mother Susan has become an aggressive advocate for consolidating federal databases on missing and unidentified persons. The fact is, involvement and cooperation at the local level is of the utmost importance in saving the lives of those classified as missing.

NCIC created the Missing Persons File in 1975, and eight years later the Unidentified Persons File was created as a database of NCIC. Currently, local law enforcement agencies under information into the Missing Persons File, but do not report cases to the Unidentified Persons File. This means the data is not being cross-referenced.

In an effort to promote cooperation at all levels, H.R. 1915 will require states to meet certain criteria before they receive these federal funds. States must report missing cases to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and law enforcement authorities throughout the state regarding every deceased unidentified person found. States will also be required to enter a profile of the unidentified person, the number assigned to the unidentified person on his or her death certificate and retain all of the records until the person is identified.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come for us to work together to find America's missing persons. Let's protect our loved ones and pass H.R. 1915.

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of my constituents, Fred and Susan Wilmer of Baldwin, NY, whose daughter Jennifer Wilmer has been missing since September 13, 1993, to express my strong support for the Jennifer's Law Act.

I am pleased that Congress has made it a priority to support efforts to locate and identify all missing persons. This critical legislation will require all law enforcement agencies to cross reference missing person files with unidentified person files, which believe it or not is rarely done. It will also authorize \$2 million in competitive grants so that states can cover the costs of providing this well needed service.

Thousands of Americans go through the daily anguish the Wilmer family experiences, wondering if they will ever see their loved ones again. I believe the Jennifer's Law Act will provide the opportunity for many of these

families to find peace of mind and closure to their unfortunate tragedies.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to express my gratitude to the Wilmers who have tirelessly transformed their personal grief into political action by committing themselves to helping other families with missing loved ones. They established "Finding Our Children Under Stress" FOCUS, an organization dedicated to supporting other parents in distress and promoting state and federal legislation to improve methods of locating missing persons.

Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of this important legislation, I wholeheartedly urge my colleagues to support this crucial legislation today. The Jennifer's Law Act is a step in the right direction that will help more and more American families locate their loved ones and I strongly urge its adoption.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to strongly support the H.R. 1915 that would Improve Reporting of Unidentified & Missing Persons.

Aptly nicknamed "Jennifer's Law," this bill will provide much needed assistance to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and will help ease the pain of families who admirably continue to search for lost loved ones. I empathize with the families such as the family of the young woman this bill was named after. As a mother, I can understand the anguish of having a child move across the country, only to have that child disappear without a trace.

This measure helps to solve such disappearances by urging States to improve their reporting on unidentified persons, people found who have memory loss, or unidentified deceased persons.

By establishing a grant program under this measure, States would have the incentive to provide far more comprehensive information concerning unidentified deceased persons. States will receive these funds only if they report to NCIC and State law enforcement authorities every deceased unidentified person found in their jurisdiction, provide a complete profile of unidentified persons—including dental records, X-rays, and finger prints, enter the NCIC number assigned to deceased unidentified persons on their death certificates, and keep all records of about unidentified persons until they are identified.

This legislation is necessary to bolster the NCIC's current files for unidentified persons. Prior to H.R. 1915, unidentified records were woefully underreported. The proposed grant program would end this dearth of information and would allow the NCIC to provide better, and far more comprehensive, information to the American public.

This legislation provides a great service to the NCIC and the American public, and by passing this bill, perhaps we will stem future suffering amongst our families. It is my hope that legislation such as this will help reunite these families with their lost loved ones.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, on June 12, residents of the Central Coast of California were devastated to learn that Christina Williams hadn't returned to her family's home after walking the dog. Seven long months later her body was found less than three miles from her home.

I was pleased to become an original cosponsor of H.R. 1915, a bill that to provide \$2 million in competitive grants to the States to improve the reporting of unidentified and missing children. In order to receive a grant, a

state would report to the National Crime Information Center and (when possible to law enforcement authorities within the state) information on every deceased unidentified person, including dental records, x-rays and fingerprints. The states would then enter the National Crime Information Center registration number or other identifying number, on the unidentified person's death certificate.

This simple cross-referencing of missing persons files against unidentified persons files will bring closure to thousands of families who anxiously await information on their loved ones. In California alone, there are over 25,000 missing person files, and only some 1,800 unidentified persons files. While Christina was found close to home which made identification easier, there are thousands of families in California who teeter on the edge of the chasm of hope and despair who will benefit from passage of H.R. 1915.

I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 1915 in memory of Christina Williams.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, again I congratulate the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO) on the good work that he has done on this bill because it will make a difference for people like Susan Wilmer, the mother of Jennifer.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1915.

The question was taken.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceeding on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 1915.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

□ 1802

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro